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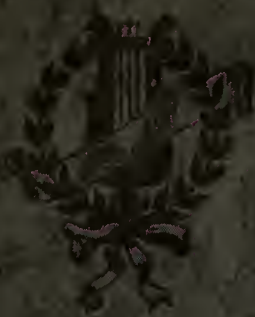
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THE STORY OF THE
VIOLANO - VIRTUOSO

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VIOLANO VIRTUOSO



MILLS NOVELTY COMPANY, CHICAGO



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The Story of the
Violano-Virtuoso

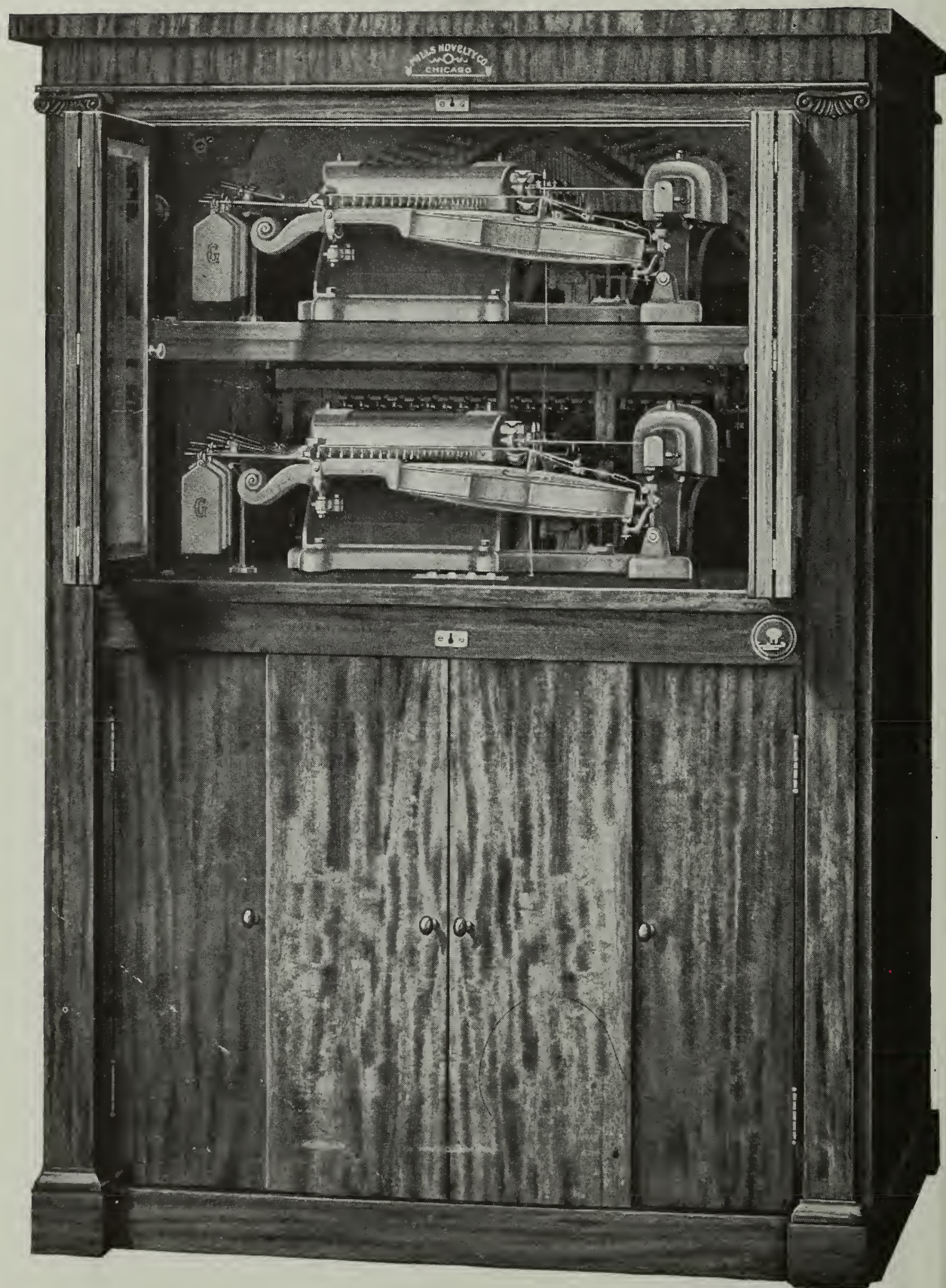
*World's Only Self-Playing
Violin and Piano*



MILLS NOVELTY COMPANY

Mills Building, 221 So. Green Street, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The Violano-Virtuoso with Two Violins



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The Story of the

Violano-Virtuoso

One of the Truly Great Achievements in the History of Music

The pages of music history are lettered with the accomplishments of the greatest geniuses of all time. So old is the art, so numerous its lovers, so enthralling and inspiring are its appeals that when a real "genius" appears in its ranks, his works really transcend what in other fields would be termed notable achievements.

Anything new in music, anything different and distinctive from what has gone before, is indeed rare. New artists appear, great masters are developed, marvelous contrivances and improvements on old styles of instruments are introduced and prove successful—yet to write ACHIEVEMENT, and to have the word carry its real meaning, on the pages of music history, the work must be really greater than "great!"

When we say that the Mills Violano-Virtuoso is one of the truly great achievements in the history of music, we make one of the strongest claims that is possible to make about anything in the musical world.

"The instrument is a marvel. One might reasonably expect some of the features which it contains, but when Mechanism can be made to produce Rhapsody, Symphony, Staccato,

Tremulo, Trills, etc., and all of them to a high degree of perfection, language is not rich enough to do it justice."

—PETE BARBOUL,
Valparaiso, Ind.

Why the Violano Is Great

The Mills Self-Playing Violin and Piano is really the kind of an instrument which an imaginative mind would expect to be invented at some time far into the future.

To create a harp where before there were no harps; to build a piano for the first time; to produce a phonograph where before none was even suggested; to develop a player-piano with only the hand-played piano as pattern—all in themselves were outstanding achievements. They were all radical departures from the best that had preceded them, yet each produced by itself immeasurable good.

The Violano bases its claim to fame on its complete newness and distinctiveness. Absolutely no instrument is manufactured today that in any way resembles or even imitates it. Even the greatest inventions have been copied, imitated, or in some manner duplicated. Practically every other musical instrument made has several other rival instruments in its own class. So completely different is the Violano that it can be called, without danger of contradiction, the **ONLY** self-playing violin of any kind.

To gain this distinction and at the same time to be completely practicable from every test and every viewpoint, this instrument surely is entitled, by intrinsic value and its contribution to the glory of music, to all the praise and success it has received.

The World Is Music-Bound

The love of good music is a universal characteristic of all mankind. Never a man was born who did not have some appreciation and feeling for this wonder art. All men can **feel** the inspiring

"The Violin with its delicacy of expression has a special appeal for many people, and its combination with the piano in the Violano-Virtuoso makes that instrument popular alike

with music lovers of all types—whether they be artists themselves or only listeners. We are highly pleased with the instrument."

—GEORGE J. VRINER,
Champaign, Ill.

thrills of music—though very few are artists themselves. The vast number of musical instruments sold in this country annually is the best testimony of the part music plays in everyone's everyday life. The astonishing **variety** of these instruments, their natures and their uses, is another proof of the universal appeal of music.

Today all keen observers in the musical world agree that the popularity of music was never so apparent, so intense. Speaking of this modern trend, one writer has said: "Millions sing, dance, play, relax, work, eat, live to the beautiful strains of music."

Without music the whole complex of our daily life, our habits, and our happiness would be tangibly altered.

Music In the Automatic Field

The general utility of music, its widespread popularity, and the consequent demand for it are factors that have led to the invention and development of automatic mechanical musical devices. The first crude automatic electric music boxes and pianos have been supplanted by better toned instruments, better control, and a greater variety of music.

Needless to say, there soon comes a certain point where ordinarily the mechanical and the artistic cannot conform. The very idea of "automatic" suggests something lacking individuality and artistry. In nearly all cases art must be sacrificed to a greater or less degree when music is put under mechanical control.

The Violano-Virtuoso succeeds in getting farther away from the common understanding of "automatic" than any other instrument in this class. Although its mechanism is self-playing, its music is in no way mechanical. The human element in the Violano

"I have put in a good many years in band and orchestra work, and must say that our Violano's rendition of popular and classical music is far

ahead of any other automatic instrument I have ever heard, and I have heard them all."

—FRED R. FARGO,
Sterling, Ill.

is really astonishing to those hearing the instrument for the first time. There is a warmth and beauty to its playing that distinguishes its musical quality entirely from other automatics.

What the Violano Is

The Violano-Virtuoso is a musical instrument comprising a real violin and a piano.

The music is not merely **like** violin music; it **is** violin music. The violin is visible as it plays. It is shaped like the standard violin; made of wood; has four strings and every position on the finger head. **It is not an imitation**—it is a **real** violin.

If you heard this violin playing behind a screen or in another room, you would be positive you heard a real violin.

The piano accompaniment to the violin harmonizes perfectly with the latter to give the effect of an orchestra of from three to eight pieces, depending on the number of violins and the number of strings being played at the same time.

This instrument plays its music from a paper music roll and is under electrical control at all times. In putting the violin under mechanical action so as to produce music that perfectly simulates that of the master violinist, the seemingly impossible has been accomplished.

\$1,000,000 Spent to Perfect the Violano-Virtuoso

To bring the Mills Violano to its present perfection many years of labor and over a million dollars in money were spent.

"It is more than paying its cost and has increased our business 30 per cent. It is a pleasure for our customers to come in and have refreshments while they are playing the Violano."

—BROADWAY
CONFECTIONERY,
316 Broadway, Fargo, N. D.

"I feel satisfied that the extra business the Violano has brought to us has more than paid for the instrument several times over."

—T. E. OGRAM,
Penn Ave. and 13th St.,
Washington, D. C.

The creation of the Violano began about fifteen years ago when H. K. Sandell started working on a mechanical apparatus to play the violin. Numerous attempts had been made in past centuries to subject the beloved violin to mechanical control—yet each attempt proved such a complete failure that for long years the idea was abandoned as impossible.

It remained for Sandell, a hitherto unknown inventor in the employ of Mills Novelty Company, ably assisted by the financial, manufacturing, and marketing resources of H. S. Mills and his organization to give the world of music lovers an instrument that brings the violin—from the artistic standpoint—not only **up** to the genius of the human musician but even **beyond** it.

So extraordinary an invention required years of costly experiment and development before it reached perfection. All the fame and good will it enjoys today was earned through real merit.

The Most Distinguished Honor Ever Conferred On Any Musical Instrument Awarded by the United States Government to the Violano-Virtuoso

Several reputable manufacturers of musical instruments can point to incidental honors—gold medals, awards of honor, etc.—conferred on their products at different fairs and expositions in this and foreign countries.

But no distinction similar to that won by the Mills Violano-Virtuoso was ever given to another musical instrument.

THE UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE HAS DESIGNATED THE VIOLANO-VIRTUOSO AS ONE OF THE EIGHT GREATEST SCIENTIFIC INVENTIONS OF THE DECADE, a ten year period particularly replete with the most ingenious inventions of all kinds!

"I have been in the theatre business for five years and have used several different kinds of pianos and orchestra players, but I have found this in-

strument so much better that I wouldn't use an electric piano or orchestra if it was furnished free."

—J. S. BUSSEY,
Pittsburgh, Kansas

To win this official governmental designation, the instrument must indeed have astonishing merit. It is seldom that the United States Government goes out of its way to confer such a distinction on any kind of a commercial product, no matter how remarkable an invention it is. It is unbelievable that an invention that was imperfect or incomplete could be so honored.

Has Stood the Test of Time

The Violano-Virtuoso has stood the only real test of any article of value—the test of time and service.

There are Violanos that have been used continuously for ten to fifteen years, subjected to the rigors of playing under all kinds of conditions and environment. Since the first models were produced, we have of course, added many new improvements and refinements as new models were presented year after year, but we point with pride to the fact that even the first models have stood up under the long service with absolute satisfaction to all concerned. The thousands of these machines that have been in active service for years conclusively show that the Violano is not an experiment, not a novelty, but a permanent and pre-eminent fixture in the world of musical instruments.

"Today my Violano-Virtuoso has been in my cafe just ten months, and the best of it is, the instrument is better today—rendering sweeter music—than the day I purchased it."

—H. ZENDER,
Wausau, Wis.

"It is a surprising thing, but nevertheless a fact, that my Violano seems to improve from month to month. I have had it now for three years and the tone quality gets sweeter all the time."

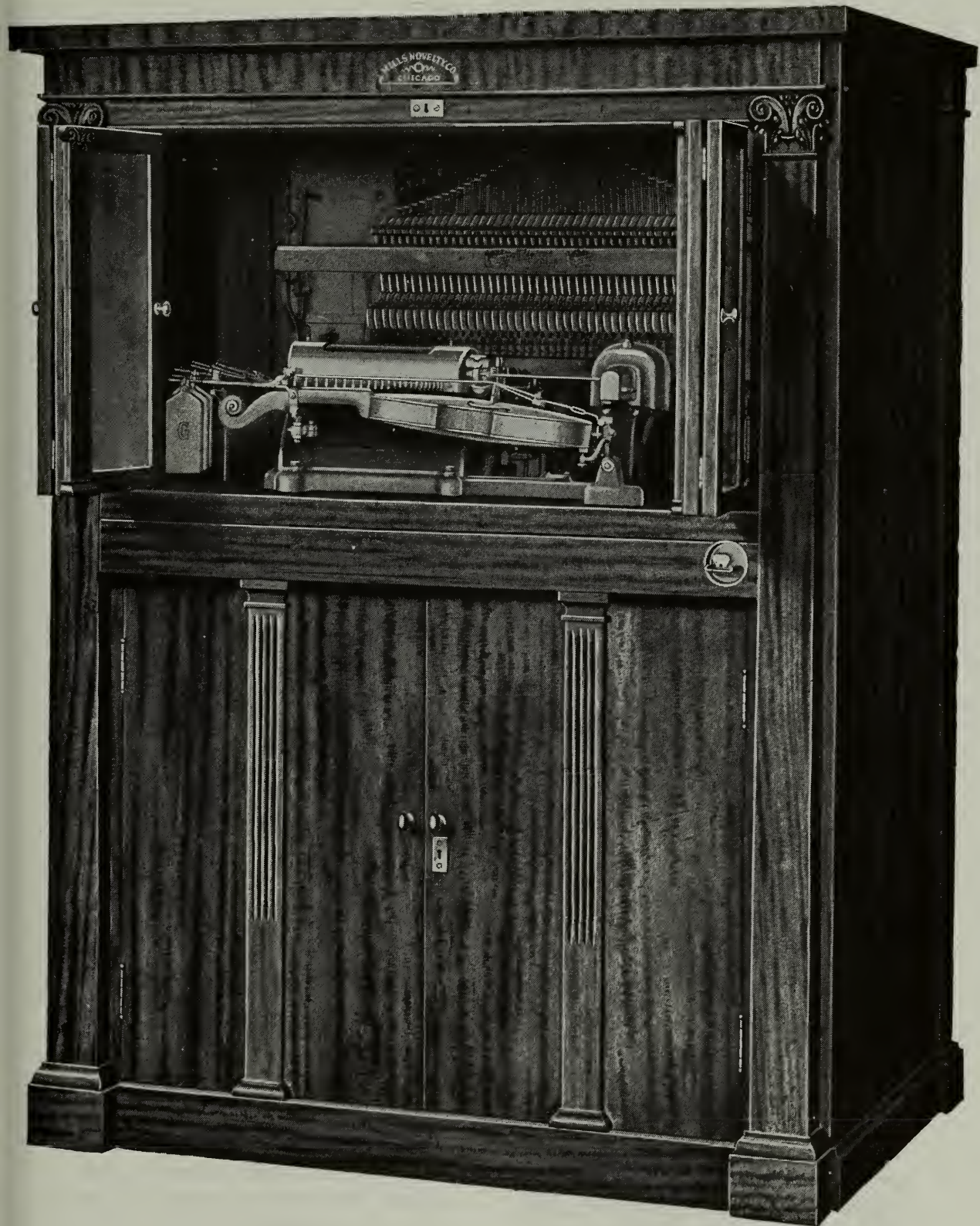
—WILLIAM P. GREEN,
Whitemarsh, Penn.

"The music in our place has not only increased our business 100%, but we receive an average of \$100.00 every month in collections."

—WILLIAM WILLIAMS,
Saginaw, Michigan.

"I can truthfully say that your Violano has increased my store business fully 30 per cent at this time of the year, and was the biggest drawing card any store ever had in this vicinity."

—W. G. DURLAND,
Monticello, N. Y.



A Front View of our "Concert Grand" Model Violano-Virtuoso—Note that it takes up less space than a piano.

The Violin

Story of Its Development—Methods of Construction

Interesting data surrounds the building of the violins for the Mills Violano.

When we first began building the Violano-Virtuoso, all our violins were bought in the open market. We had buyers in all the recognized markets of the world, seeking the best violins that the world's most noted violin makers could produce. Nowhere—even among the highest priced instruments—could we find exactly what we wanted. The violins were not standard; the scales varied; no instruments could be found that had the stamina for continuous playing.

During our years of experimenting, we tried out over two hundred different makes of violins, but could not find any that would afford the service required for our instrument.

The very best models would stand for only an hour's steady playing, at the end of which they would lose their tone and resonance and give off only weak, wheezy sounds. If permitted to rest they would recover all their original qualities, but on being played again, exactly the same thing would happen.

Only recently a leading violin maker, who makes violins that sell as high as \$1,000 each, installed one of his instruments in the Violano for a test and he was very much surprised when it failed completely after an hour's steady playing.

"Will say that our collections per month average about \$100, and on exceptional rolls more than that. We are very much pleased with our instrument, and find that our patrons are, too."

—S. D. CONTOS,
915 Meridian St., Anderson, Ind.

"I actually collected enough nickels out of the instrument and boxes during the first thirteen months to pay for the instrument."

—HERMAN MOSER,
33d and York Sts.,
Philadelphia, Pa.

The Toning of the Wood

Our experts set themselves to the task of overcoming this difficulty. It was recognized at once that we must make our own violins in our own factory to suit our particular needs.

The discovery of a secret process of toning the wood offered the solution to the problem. The front and back parts of the violin are harmonically attuned so that the vibrations of both support each other. Woods are selected for proper pitch from an immense stock; the sensitive ear of our master "musician-maker"



At the bench near the window of his 8th floor workshop sits the man who re-discovered the great secret of the success of the old Italian Master Violin makers — the toning of the wood.

detects the scientifically correct tones in the different pieces of wood, and "mates" them by the secret process. As a result, all our violins are distinguished by a uniform purity, and brilliance of tone.

"Its mechanism is so simple that anyone can operate it with the greatest of satisfaction, and it has never given us one bit of trouble."

—CHAS. H. MULLEN,
7 Howard St., Albany, N. Y.

"I hesitated for some time about purchasing it, for I was afraid so delicate a mechanism would get out of order easily; but I have had no trouble with it, though I have kept it in continuous use for several years."

—CHRIS. KACHUDAS,
804 E. 63d St., Chicago, Ill.

Each violin is modeled after the famous Stradivarius, following the correct principles as to height of arch, placing of sounding post and general working technique.

The backs of the violins are of extra thickness—they can stand the severest strain of continuous playing without any suggestion of “tiring” or loss of tone. As a matter of fact the more a Mills violin is played, the sweeter and purer its tone becomes. Many of our customers who have had violins for several years have been offered almost as much for the violin in their instruments as they originally paid for the entire instrument. Practically all customers who trade in earlier instruments for later models, insist that we be sure to put their old violins in the new instrument.

Woods Carefully Selected

Woods used in the making of each violin are selected with infinite care. The finest spruce woods come from the Adirondacks and the best maple from northern Minnesota forests. This wood is air-dried for five years before our experts begin to carve it into violin shape. Human carving skill is aided by patented carving machines of our exclusive design. Fingers are laid out on a perfect chromatic scale because the instrument could not mechanically overcome imperfections in scale as the human artist might by changing his own fingering. After the assembled whole is tested by an expert the violin is rubbed, oiled, stained and finished with a special varnish.

“We have been employing a five piece orchestra, but we find that our patrons are more pleased with the music of the Violano, so we have dispensed with the orchestra.”

—L. MUSIL CO.,
Racine, Wis.

“We highly indorse the Violano. We believe it will increase its owner’s business 50 per cent. It is full of pep and makes everybody feel like dancing—young and old.”

—MONROE CANDY AND FRUIT
SUPPLY COMPANY,
Monroe and Jefferson Sts.,
Mexico, Mo.

“The more a person hears the Violano-Virtuoso, the more he wants to hear it. It certainly has any orchestra skinned.”

—STEVEN BAKOS,
5114 S. Kedzie Ave., Chicago, Ill.

“Certainly the music rendered by the Violano is in a class by itself.”

—McCRUM DRUG CO.,
Lexington, Va.

Violins Must Be "Trained"

A new violin is a bugaboo to any real musician. The instrument must be trained to give the full rich tones of which it is capable. In former times master violin makers employed musicians by the day to sit for hours and play their fiddles in order to age them properly. In every violin there are about fifty different pieces of wood and before all can become properly "sympathized" so that they will vibrate in unison, a certain amount of correct playing is required.

Our violins are not entrusted to a more or less indifferent player for this aging—each instrument is given its preliminary training on the Violano-Virtuoso itself. Thus the violin gets many days of technically correct playing before it is put on the market. When your instrument reaches you, its tone is pure and mellow, and all suggestion of harshness removed.

How the Violin Operates

The violin in the Mills Violano does all alone what a thinking human being, educated for years in musical practice, can do with a violin, a bow, his hands, and the rest of his body.

It does its own bowing, its own fingering, its expressioning, its starting and stopping. It has its own individuality just as has the human violinist. To do what it does, one would imagine, would require an intricate, complicated mechanism with a vast number of parts.

As a matter of fact the instrument is a marvel of simplicity both in construction and in operation.

"I also take great pleasure in opening the instrument, showing just how it is operated."

—W. M. SMITH,
Owensboro, Ky.

"If the Violano had never taken in a penny, it would still be worth the investment as a drawing card for our business."

—A. E. CONDEE,
Mount Stirling, Ill.

The mechanism is entirely under the control of electrical magnetism, and it is the scientific use of this force that gives the Violano its almost human power.

Simplicity the Keynote

When a coin is deposited in the instrument or the starting lever tripped, the contact cylinder, carrying the paper music roll, revolves. A wire brush passes over the paper, the fine strands of wire making electrical contact through the perforations in the paper. Every position on the fingerhead of the violin is under the control of an individual finger magnet, and when the contact is formed through the perforation the electric current draws the finger down against the string. The same current acts simultaneously on the bow action magnets; the bows, which are circular discs made of leaves of celluloid, are driven continuously by the bow motor and at the same instant that the finger is pressed against the string, dip down and sound the note. Another magnet produces the staccato, while the tremolo is obtained by means of a third magnet which vibrates the tail piece through the medium of the shaker bar.

The magnets do what the human violinist's fingers do. A thousand more parts might be necessary to produce the same result by any means other than by the electrical magnetic process.

Every part of the mechanism functions instantaneously; there are no major parts to get out of order; as long as the current is there the violin will play. The violin fingers move only one-sixteenth of an inch in playing the notes so that there is very little chance for them to get out of order.

"I have not touched the Violano in more than six months outside of changing strings and tuning the violin at the beginning of a new string and occasionally oiling."

—ADOLPH PETERSON,
Gwinn, Mich.

"I hesitated about purchasing it because I was afraid so delicate a mechanism would get out of order easily, but I have had no trouble with it though I have kept it in continuous use for several years."

—EMPRESS CANDY CO.,
Chicago.

Revolving Bows

The bows are revolved by a simple motor—there are four bows, one for each string.

This motor driven bow is so simply and yet so ingeniously designed that it does everything that a hand bow can do and a little more. It is built up of conical discs of flexible celluloid, the edge of each disc acting as the hair of a bow. The full musical resonance of the straight bow is thus produced on this circular bow, while the revolving action gives a much steadier stroke and an unusual clearness to the music.

Because the Violano-Virtuoso has an individual finger for every note and a bow for each string on the violin, it is capable of playing all four strings at once, producing stringed quartette and other harmonies perfectly. One instrument can thus give you musical effects which it would take at least two human violinists to produce.

The circular bows also permit a continuous stroke which can play a note of any duration. The human violinist is confined to playing a single note only long enough to run his bow its full length up or down the string.

How the Bows Give Superb Expression

To completely remove all suggestion of the mechanical in this music, the pressure of the bows against the strings is at all times under the automatic control of the music roll. The speed of the bowing and the amount of the pressure determine the loudness and softness of the notes, and if these factors did not vary in the same way as the artist's playing when he is recording the roll, there would be no gradation of expression to the music.

"Has averaged at least \$100 per month in the two years I have owned it."

—JOS DISTILLATOR,
601 Main St., Norfolk, Va.

"In the two and one-half years we have had the Violano, we have taken in \$1,625."

—PENCE & STERLING,
Charlottesville, Va.



But control of both speed and pressure on the bows is perfect. Regardless of how slow or fast the tempo the proper ratio of pressure is consistently maintained. The bow motor successfully solves this problem. It has a speed of from 200 to 6,000 revolutions per minute. Pressure automatically increases as the speed is increased. Thus even the softest notes are clear and sweet, while the loud are rich and sonorous.

Acme of Violin Versatility

Since the first Violanos were made, year after year our inventors and mechanics have worked on improvements to make this wonder instrument more and more human. Today, practically every means for procuring human expression has been added to the Violano in the form of various patented devices. Among these expression variants are tremolo, staccato, arpeggio, portamento, pizzacato, shake, trill, etc.



The Violin Stays in Tune

“How can you tune your violins mechanically, in the way the ordinary violinist has to do after playing a few pieces?” is a question we are often asked by prospective buyers. For no matter how extraordinary our instrument might be, if the strings were not properly tuned it could not produce good music.

Our violin, however, does not tune itself; it simply is regulated to stay in tune permanently after once being properly tuned.

The strings on a hand-played violin are fastened at the tension required by the violinist while playing a particular selection. They are subject to contraction or expansion caused by heat, cold, weather, movement of the artist's fingers, etc. The strings on our violins, however, provide against this expansion or contraction by means of weight balances, one of which is secured to each string and holds it at the proper tension **all the time**.

Each string is thus permanently kept in tune, and if the instrument is not meddled with from the outside, it should hold its tune for a very long time. The instrument has a tuning device for occasions such as when a string is changed. This tuning is very simple and only requires a moment.

Bows Automatically Resined

The strings are automatically resined by an ingenious device which makes resining by hand unnecessary. Resin is kept in a box directly underneath the bows. This box is under the control of a governor which causes it to raise or lower according as the speed of the motor varies. The greater the need for resin the more that is automatically supplied.

“Will say that the approximate earnings amount to from \$105.00 to \$110.00 per month, or a total of \$1,397.50.

—GEORGE SAYKSLY,
Escanaba, Mich.

“The Violano's collections average about \$160.00 a month, and I think it has increased my business about 25 per cent.”

—W. E. WINTERRINGER,
116 E. Main St.,
Marshalltown, Iowa.

The Piano in the Mills Violano-Virtuoso

The piano accompaniment in the Violano helps make it a complete instrument, giving the power for producing orchestral effects, and distinguishing it from all other makes of automatic pianos on the market. The violin and piano parts furnish just enough fullness of sound to be thoroughly musical and artistic, without becoming noisy or displeasing. Because of the way in which our instruments are built to give remarkable clearness and beauty of tone there is no jumbling of notes or discordance of sound that often disgusts the true music lover in other automatic music.

It is only fitting that the extraordinary violin, in its need for an accompaniment, should have something better than an ordinary piano. And the Mills piano is just as extraordinary in its own way as is the violin.

There is no piano on the market today that in any way resembles ours. This piano is the only one made that directly operates on electricity. There are dozens of other automatic and "electric" pianos which merely use an electric motor to furnish the power necessary to operate their pneumatic apparatus—all co-called "electric" pianos operate in this way.

No Pneumatic Action in the Mills

There is no air action in our piano—hence the usual complicated pneumatic apparatus is dispensed with. There are no rubber tubes, air conduits, bellows, wooden valves, sliding blocks or any such complicated parts in our instrument to get out of order. Replacements of all such parts which are usually required every year or two on ordinary automatic pianos are not necessary on the Mills Violano.

"We highly endorse the Violano. We believe it will increase its owners' business 50%."

—MONROE CANDY CO.,
Mexico, Mo.

"Would say that in the first eight months my machine paid for itself in nickels taken in; also increased my sales 30%."

—PAUL R. WICKERT,
Escanaba, Mich.

Ours is purely an electrically operated piano. There is a magnet for each one of the forty-four notes; when the perforations in the music rolls permit the current through to complete the contact, the magnets pull the hammer down on the strings to sound the notes. The only way for the piano to get out of order would be for one of the magnets to burn out, and as all magnets are tested for a voltage many times what they will ever be required to carry, this seldom happens.

The piano plays by electricity. The response of the action is instantaneous. Electrical control of pedaling also permits a fine range of expression.

Specially Arranged Strings

Our piano is the only one made with its unique arrangement of strings; instead of placing the long strings on one side of the piano and the shorter ones on the other side—as is the case with all other pianos; the long bass strings are placed in the middle of the sounding board and the shorter treble strings are on either side. The result is an unusual balance and evenness of tone. Each string has its proper length without crossing over another string. This arrangement is scientifically correct as the vibration of one string against the sounding board does not interfere with that of another. The piano also stays in tune longer, as the tension on the piano plate is evenly distributed and does not have a tendency to twist the plate.

"I can safely say that the instrument has averaged \$100.00 per month in the two years that I have owned it."

—JOE DISTILLATOR,
Norfolk, Va.

"During the sixteen months it has been in my possession it has netted me something over \$1,470.00."

—PETER PSAROS,
Davenport, Iowa.

"My Violano took in approximately \$2,000 in one year."

—H. ERMATINGER,
Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.

"Averaged \$80 a month since installing it."

—FRANK MUZILLO,
Auburn, Ind.

Violano Music and Monthly Service

Each month we publish a new list of current music—popular, classical, dance, special numbers, etc. These music rolls are made exclusively for the Mills Violano-Virtuoso. A bulletin is issued every month containing the new selections and is sent to every Violano owner. A nominal charge is made for the rolls, and we have different music service plans that permit the customer to get his music on a most economical basis.

Because our rolls are produced in such an unusual way—a method entirely different from those used by the world's largest music roll publishers—Violano music is absolutely distinctive in its quality and lack of mechanical effects.

The usual way of making a music roll—and the way employed by all publishers except us—is to have the musician mark the paper of the master roll, and afterward these markings are cut out with a punch by hand. Necessarily, the mechanical way of making a roll suggests the mechanical nature of its music.

Our music is reproduced in an entirely different manner. By means of a special recording machine, the artist is enabled to play the music **right into the roll**. Every time he touches a note on the violin or piano, it cuts a hole directly into the paper. Thus his technique and individuality are in no way lost in the process of reproduction. The music as transferred to the roll is **actually hand-played**—the most genuine reproduction of the original artist's work that it is possible to obtain.

The music that plays on your Violano has unmistakable personal expression qualities. That is why this self-playing violin and piano is rarely referred to merely as an "automatic instrument."

"Your self-playing electric violin has been taking in about \$100.00 per month regularly and has brought considerable new trade to my store. People come from nearby towns to hear the fine music it plays and it is a great attraction."

"The music in our place has not only increased our business 100 per cent, but we receive an average of \$100 every month in collections. The Violano brings us new customers because it attracts to our store people on the street who think it is a real orchestra playing."

—WILLIAM WILLIAMS,
314 Genesee S., Saginaw, Mich.

How Much Service Does the Violano Require?

Because of its extreme simplicity of construction and operation, it is very rare that any trouble is had with the Violano, provided the owner gives it a little care. The Violano-Virtuoso is built to keep in perfect working condition all the time. Being a mechanical instrument, sometimes minor adjustments and repairs are needed. The owner can take care of these himself in a few minutes.

A book of operating instructions is supplied to the purchaser of each instrument. This book gives simple directions which anyone can follow, and our service men instruct each customer thoroughly when the instrument is first installed.

Our service men are constantly travelling in owners' territory, and on notification from owner that he requires repairs, we instruct our man to see him immediately.

If the Violano owner sees that his instrument is not meddled with, and faithfully takes care of the few simple adjustments that may be required at times, his instrument will stay in perfect working order for a remarkably long time. The Violano requires far less attention than the average automatic piano. There is no limit to how much service the instrument can give you. Of the many instruments that have already been in use **ten years or more**, few required any important replacement of parts or mechanism

"We want to thank you for the great interest you have taken in giving us service and in keeping us posted every month concerning the latest music rolls."

—JOHNSON & ANDERSON,
211 Park Row, New York, N. Y.

"We are well pleased with the prompt attention we get in the way of music roll and other service as required of you."

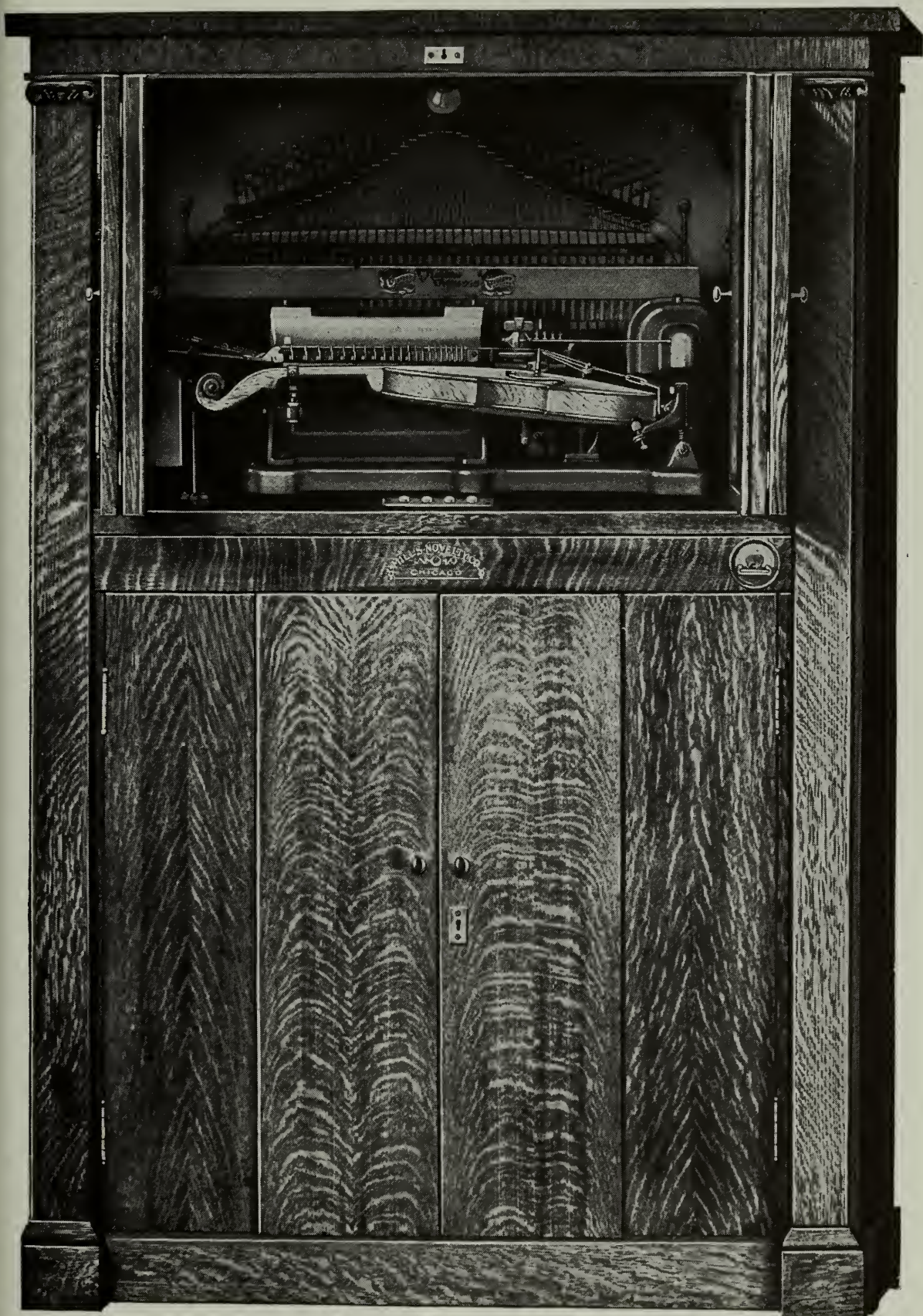
—P. HATZIS & CO.,
Peoria, Ill.

"We use it instead of an orchestra for our dining room."

—F. S. OZIER, President,
Hotel Howe, Akron, Ohio.

"Since installing your machine last August we have not had the least bit of trouble."

—ANDREW RUBEKAS,
Oxford, O.



Our "Baby Grand" Model Violano-Virtuoso here pictured is a trifle smaller than the "Concert Grand" shown on another page.

A Remarkable Investment for the Modern Merchant

The modern merchant is always on the lookout for new money-making opportunities. He is interested in any safe proposition that allows him to turn over his money rapidly and earn a good return on it.

From the investment standpoint the Violano-Virtuoso offers one of the most attractive purchases any storekeeper can make. The testimonials printed on the different pages of this catalog will give you an idea of what this instrument earns in the store. The average earnings are shown to be anywhere from \$50 to \$100 a month—which often amounts to 100% or much more return on the money invested. The trade increases reported are from 25% to 50%, which indicates a corresponding increase in profits secured from this extra trade. Every day the instrument is in the store it is earning money.

Our liberal terms make it easy for the average merchant to buy and pay for his instrument. After one small down payment the machine is installed and then the profits it makes each month in most cases take care of the regular monthly payment that is required. After a few months, many report, the instrument has paid for itself in full, and then all the profits go to the owner and he still has an extremely valuable instrument besides.

Thousands have followed this plan in getting Violanos for their Confectioneries, Ice Cream Parlors, Restaurants, Tea Shops, Billiard Parlors, Dance Halls, Hotels, Clubs, Theatres, etc.

This is a proven way of making your money pay you bigger returns than hundreds of other possible investments. Why not get some of these profits for yourself?

*"My Violano has taken in \$5,364.75
in three and one-half years."*

—WM. KNELLER,
Milwaukee, Wis.

*"My machine has taken in nearly
\$5,000 in four years."*

—CHAS. REDMIND,
Augusta, Wis.

MILLS MELODY VIOLINS



The Newest and Most Wonderful of Theatre Instruments

The mastery of the violin, first accomplished in the Mills Violano-Virtuoso, reaches its ideal culmination in Mills Melody Violins. By means of this wonder instrument it is now possible to play any number of violins—from one to a hundred—from a keyboard, in the way in which a piano or organ are ordinarily played.

The musician sits at the console, touches the keys, and plays the violins. He can draw out of the instruments any amount, any variety of real violin music. He can play all four strings at once, hold notes for any length of time, and perform a score of other feats that even the most skillful musician cannot do.

By means of Mills Melody Violins, one musician can take over the work of the first and second violin sections of a big orchestra.

For the moving picture house or legitimate theatre, this is the perfect instrument to be used in conjunction with organ or piano. It affords an endless variety of orchestral music and is a great entertaining feature for audiences.

Made in special models and finishes.

MILLS NEW ELECTRIC PIANO



This new piano represents one of the greatest developments in the automatic piano field. There is no other piano that is in any way like it. It is built and operates in a way entirely different from all other instruments.

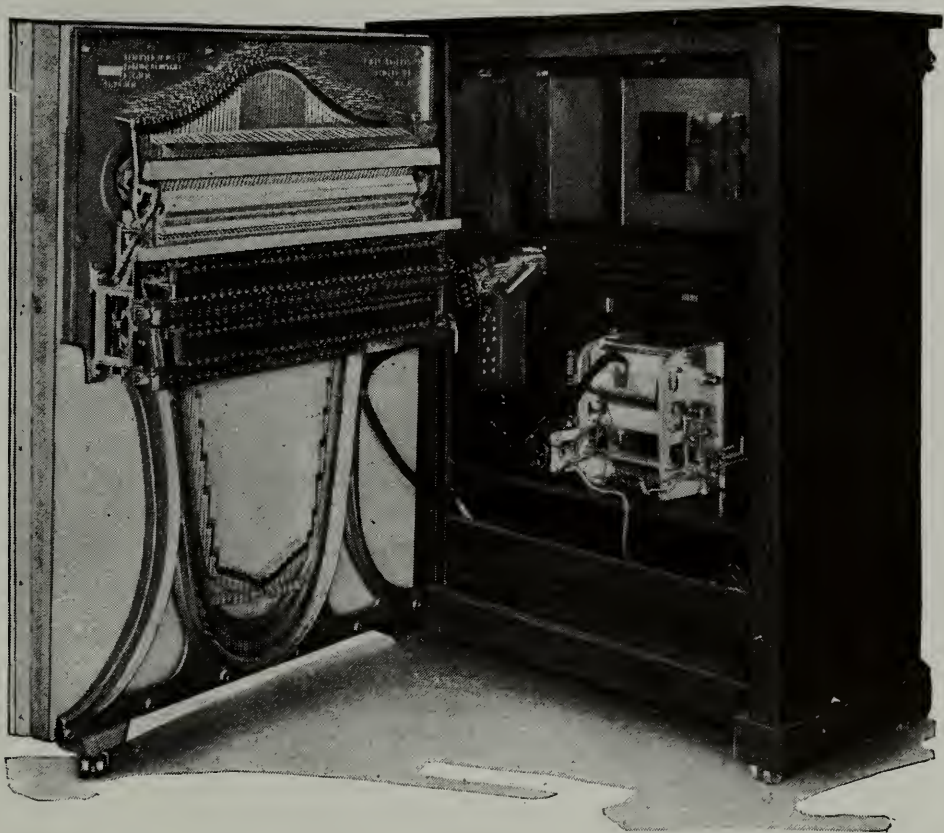
The Mills Electric Piano is the only piano on the market today that is directly operated by electricity—it has no pneumatic apparatus whatever. It is a sixty-five note piano of the same magnetic action as the piano part of the Violano-Virtuoso, described in another part of this catalog.

It has a wonderfully superior tone, resembling that found in

the most expensive home pianos costing thousands of dollars. Its graduation of expression over its entire range is so perfect, that when the music is heard in another room or any place where the instrument itself is not visible, it cannot be distinguished from that of an accomplished artist playing in person.

Because of the remarkable simplicity of construction, and the absence of a thousand complicated parts found in all other automatic pianos, this piano should give twenty years of steady service to its owner. It is the ideal instrument for the merchant who has a better class store, but who does not desire an instrument quite as expensive as the Violano.

Standard and special finishes in oak and mahogany.



Note Simplicity of Mechanism and Operation

Thousands of Enthusiastic Owners



A Beautiful Fixture for Any Store



Violanos in All Types of Stores



Suited to the Small Town and Big City, Too



Instrument in Prominent New York Hotel



J. P. HILL, PRESIDENT
JOHN H. MURPHY, VICE PRESIDENT
H. H. HENDRY, PRESIDENT
A. S. KERRY, VICE PRESIDENT



L. A. NADEAU, DIRECTOR GENERAL
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C. R. COLLINS, TREASURER
JOHN W. ROBERTS, GENERAL

OPENS JUNE FIRST

CLOSING OCTOBER NINETEENTH

ALASKA-YUKON-PACIFIC EXPOSITION
SEATTLE 1909

October 1, 1909.

Mr. H. S. Mills,
President, Mills Novelty Company,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Sir:

Through the kindness of your representative, Mr. J. F. Sandell, I have had the pleasure several times of hearing the automatic violin-piano. It certainly is the great musical invention of the age, and during our Exposition pleased countless thousands of people, I am sure, as much as it did me. The sweetness of its tone and correctness of rhythm are indeed great charms.

Yours very truly,

Director General.

W. DE C. RAVENEL
Chairman

W. DE C. RAVENEL
Vice-Chairman

Wm. M. GEORGE
Secretary and Discharge Officer

United States Government Board of Managers
Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition
(Seattle, Washington)

Sept. 15, 1909.

Mr. H. S. Mills, Pres.
Mills Novelty Co. Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir-

Have just had the pleasure of listening to your wonderful Automatic Violin and Piano exhibition at the Government Building here. This marvelous instrument certainly far surpasses anything that I have ever heard in automatic music.

The tone and expression of the violin and piano is so perfect and clear that it is really hard to believe but that there is the human hand playing.

Wishing it all kinds of success, I am

Sincerely Yours,

Governor of Idaho

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